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ABSTRACT

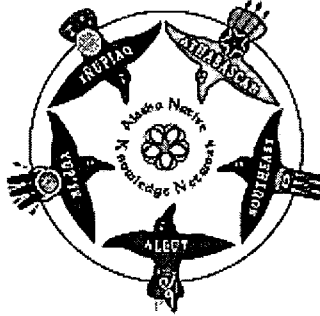
Guidelines are presented that address issues in the documentation, representation, and utilization of Alaska Natives' traditional cultural knowledge. This guidance is intended to encourage the incorporation of indigenous knowledge and teaching practices in schools by minimizing the potential for misuse and misunderstanding. The guidelines provide assistance to school personnel seeking to apply the Alaska standards for culturally responsive schools in their work. Native educators throughout the state contributed to the development of these guidelines through a series of workshops and meetings associated with the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative. Throughout this document, Elders are accorded a central role as the primary source of cultural knowledge. Guidelines are listed to increase the cultural responsiveness of Native Elders, authors and illustrators, curriculum developers and administrators, teachers, editors and publishers, document reviewers, researchers, Native language experts, Native community organizations, and the general public. Ten general recommendations are also offered to public agencies, institutions, and communities to support the effective implementation of the guidelines. (SV)

GUIDELINES FOR RESPECTING CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

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Adopted February 1, 2000

by

Assembly of Alaska Native Educators
Anchorage, Alaska

The following guidelines address issues of concern in the documentation, representation and utilization of traditional cultural knowledge as they relate to the role of various participants, including Elders, authors, curriculum developers, classroom teachers, publishers and researchers. Special attention is given to the educational implications for the integration of indigenous knowledge and practices in schools throughout Alaska. The guidance offered in the following pages is intended to encourage the incorporation of traditional knowledge and teaching practices in schools by minimizing the potential for misuse and misunderstanding in the process. It is hoped that these guidelines will facilitate the coming together of the many cultural traditions that coexist in Alaska in constructive, respectful and mutually beneficial ways.

Native educators from throughout the state contributed to the development of these guidelines through a series of workshops and meetings associated with the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative. Representatives of the Native educator organizations listed on the cover participated in the meetings and ratified the final

document. The purpose of these guidelines is to offer assistance to educational personnel and others who are seeking to incorporate the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools in their work. Using these guidelines will help expand the base of knowledge and expertise that culturally responsive teachers (including Elders, aides, bilingual instructors, etc.) are able to draw upon to enliven their work as educators.

Throughout this document, Elders are accorded a central role as the primary source of cultural knowledge. It should be understood that the identification of "Elders" as culture-bearers is not simply a matter of chronological age, but a function of the respect accorded to individuals in each community who exemplify the values and lifeways of the local culture and who possess the wisdom and willingness to pass their knowledge on to future generations. Respected Elders serve as the philosophers, professors and visionaries of a cultural community. In addition, many aspects of cultural knowledge can be learned from other members of a community who have not yet been recognized as Elders, but seek to practice and teach local lifeways in culturally appropriate ways

Along with these "guidelines" are a set of "general recommendations" aimed at stipulating the kind of steps that need to be taken to achieve the goals for which they are intended. State and federal agencies, universities, school districts, textbook publishers and Native communities are all encouraged to review their policies, programs and practices and to adopt these guidelines and recommendations wherever appropriate. In so doing, the educational experiences of students throughout Alaska will be enriched and the future well-being of the communities being served will be enhanced.

Further information on issues related to the implementation of these guidelines, as well as additional copies may be obtained from the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK 99775 (<http://www.ankn.uaf.edu>).

Guidelines for Native Elders

As one of the primary sources of traditional cultural knowledge, Native Elders bear the responsibility to share and pass on that knowledge in ways that are compatible with traditional teachings and practices.

Native Elders may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Participate in local and regional Elders Councils as a way to help formulate, document and pass on traditional cultural knowledge for future generations.
- b. Help make explicit and incorporate locally appropriate cultural values in all aspects of life in the community, while recognizing the diversity of opinion that may exist.
- c. Make a point to utilize traditional ways of knowing, teaching, listening and learning in passing on cultural knowledge to others in the community.
- d. Seek out information on ways to protect intellectual property rights and retain copyright authority over all local knowledge that is being shared with others for documentation purposes.
- e. Carefully review contracts and release forms to determine who controls the distribution of any publications and associated royalties.
- f. Review all transcripts of cultural information that has been written down to insure accuracy.
- g. Follow appropriate traditional protocols as much as possible in the interpretation and utilization of cultural knowledge.
- h. Assist willing members of the community to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to assume the role of Elder for future generations.

Guidelines for Authors and Illustrators

Authors and illustrators should take all steps necessary to insure that any representation of cultural content is accurate, contextually appropriate and explicitly acknowledged.

Authors and illustrators may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Make it a practice to insure that all cultural content has been acquired under informed consent and has been reviewed for accuracy and appropriateness by knowledgeable local people representative of the culture in question.
- b. Arrange for copyright authority and royalties to be retained or shared by the person or community from which the cultural information originated, and follow local protocols for its approval and distribution.
- c. Insure controlled access for sensitive cultural information that has not been explicitly authorized for general distribution.
- d. Be explicit in describing how all cultural knowledge and material has been acquired, authenticated and utilized, and present any significant differing points of view that may exist.
- e. Make explicit the audience(s) for which a cultural document is intended, as well as the point of view of the person(s) preparing the document.
- f. Make every effort to utilize traditional names for people, places, items, etc., adhering to local conventions for spelling and pronunciation.
- g. Identify all primary contributors and secondary sources for a particular document, and share the authorship whenever possible.
- h. Acquire extensive first-hand experience in a new cultural context before writing about it.
- i. Carefully explain the intent and use when obtaining permission to take photographs or videos, and make it clear in publication whether they have been staged as a re-enactment or represent actual events.
- j. When documenting oral history, recognize and consider the power of the written word and the implications of putting oral tradition with all its non-verbal connotations down on paper, always striving to convey the original meaning and context as much as possible.

Guidelines for Curriculum Developers and Administrators

Curriculum developers and administrators should provide multiple avenues for the incorporation of locally recognized expertise in all actions related to the use and interpretation of local cultural knowledge and practices.

Curriculum developers and administrators may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Establish an easily accessible repository of culturally appropriate resource materials and knowledgeable expertise from the community.
- b. Include the voices of representatives from the local culture in the curriculum materials used in the school.
- c. Utilize the natural environment of the community to move educational activities beyond the classroom as a way of fostering place-based education and deepening the learning experiences of students.
- d. Support the implementation of an Elders-in-Residence program in each school and classroom.
- e. Provide an in-depth cultural orientation program for all new teachers and administrators.
- f. Promote the incorporation of the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools in all aspects of the school curriculum, while demonstrating their applicability in providing multiple avenues to meet the State Content Standards.
- g. Utilize Elders and Native teachers from the local community to acquire a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the local, regional and statewide context in which the students live, particularly as it relates to the well-being and survival of the local culture.
- h. Make use of locally produced resource materials (reports, videos, maps, books, tribal documents, etc.) in all subject areas and work in close collaboration with local agencies to enrich the curriculum beyond the scope of commercially produced texts.
- i. Establish a review committee of locally knowledgeable people to review all textbooks and other curriculum materials for accuracy and appropriateness in relation to the local cultural context, as well as to examine the overall cultural responsiveness of the educational system.

Guidelines for Educators

Classroom teachers are responsible for drawing upon Elders and other cultural experts in the surrounding community to make sure all resource materials and learning activities are culturally accurate and appropriate

Teachers may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Learn how to use local ways of knowing and teaching to link the knowledge base of the school to that of the community.
- b. Make effective use of local expertise, especially Elders, as co-teachers whenever local cultural knowledge is being addressed in the curriculum.
- c. Take steps to recognize and validate all aspects of the knowledge students bring with them, and assist them in their on-going quest for personal and cultural affirmation.
- d. Develop the observation and listening skills necessary to acquire an in-depth understanding of the knowledge system indigenous to the local community and apply that understanding in teaching practice.
- e. Carefully review all curriculum resource materials to insure cultural accuracy and appropriateness.
- f. Make every effort to utilize locally relevant curriculum materials with which students can readily identify, including materials prepared by Native authors.
- g. Provide sufficient flexibility in scheduling Elder participation so they are able to fully share what they know with minimal interference by the clock, and provide enough advance notice for them to make the necessary preparations.
- h. Align all subject matter with the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools and develop curriculum models that are based on the local cultural and environmental experiences of the students.
- i. Recognize the importance of cultural and intellectual property rights in teaching practice and honor such rights in all aspects of the selection and utilization of curriculum resources (see attached bibliography for details).

Guidelines for Editors and Publishers

Editors and publishers should utilize culturally knowledgeable authors and establish multiple levels of review to insure that all publications are culturally accurate and appropriate.

Editors and publishers may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Encourage and support Native-authors and provide appropriate biographical information and photographs of the author(s) of culturally oriented material.
- b. Return a significant proportion of publication proceeds and royalties to the person or community from which it originated.
- c. Submit all manuscripts with cultural content to locally knowledgeable personnel for review, making effective use of local and regional entities set up for this purpose.
- d. Insure appropriate review, approval and access for all digital and Internet-based materials.
- e. Resolve all disagreements on cultural content or distribution before final publication.
- f. Always return to the original source for re-authorization of subsequent printings.
- g. All content of textbooks for general curricular use should be examined to make sure it is widely accepted and recognized, and not just an individual author's opinion.
- h. Honor all local conventions for recognizing cultural and intellectual property rights.

Guidelines for Document Reviewers

Reviewers should give informed consideration to the cultural perspectives of all groups represented in documents subjected to review.

Document reviewers may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Always be as explicit as possible in identifying the background experience and personal reference points on which the interpretation of cultural meaning is based.
- b. Whenever possible and appropriate, reviews of cultural materials should be provided from multiple perspectives and interpretations.
- c. When critical decisions about a publication are to be made, a panel of reviewers should be established in such a way as to provide a cross-check from several cultural perspectives.
- d. Publications that misrepresent or omit cultural content should be identified as such, regardless of their remaining literary merit.
- e. Reviews of movies involving cultural themes should utilize the same guidelines as those outlined for published documents.

Guidelines for Researchers

Researchers are ethically responsible for obtaining informed consent, accurately representing the cultural perspective and protecting the cultural integrity and rights of all participants in a research endeavor.

Researchers may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Effectively identify and utilize the expertise in participating communities to enhance the quality of data gathering as well as the data itself, and use caution in applying external frames of reference in its analysis and interpretation.
- b. Insure controlled access for sensitive cultural information that has not been explicitly authorized for general distribution, as determined by members of the local community.
- c. Submit research plans as well as results for review by a locally knowledgeable group and abide by its recommendations to the maximum extent possible.
- d. Provide full disclosure of funding sources, sponsors, institutional affiliations and reviewers.
- e. Include explicit recognition of all research contributors in the final report.
- f. Abide by the research principles and guidelines established by the Alaska Federation of Natives and other state, national and international organizations representing indigenous peoples.

Guidelines for Native Language Specialists

Native language specialists are responsible for taking all steps possible to accurately convey the meaning associated with cultural knowledge that has been shared in a traditional language.

Native language specialists may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Whenever possible, utilize a panel of local experts rather than a single source to corroborate translation and interpretation of language materials, as well as to construct words for new terms.
- b. Encourage the use and teaching of the local language in ways that provide appropriate context for conveying accurate meaning and interpretation, including an appreciation for the subtleties of story construction, use of metaphor and oratorical skills.
- c. Provide Elders with opportunities and support to share what they know in the local language.
- d. Whenever possible, utilize simultaneous translation equipment at meetings to facilitate the use of the local language.
- e. Prepare curriculum resource materials that utilize the local language, so as to make it as easy as possible for teachers to draw upon the local language in their teaching.

Guidelines for Native Community Organizations

Native community organizations should establish a process for review and authorization of activities involving the gathering, documentation and use of local cultural knowledge.

Native community organizations may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. The Native educator associations should establish regional clearinghouses to provide an on-going process for the review and certification of cultural resource materials, including utilizing the available expertise of retired Native educators.
- b. Native educators should engage in critical self-assessment and participatory research to ascertain the extent to which their teaching practices are effectively grounded in the traditional ways of transmitting the culture of the surrounding community.
- c. Native communities should provide a support mechanism to assist Elders in understanding the processes of giving informed consent and filing for copyright protections, and publicize the availability of such assistance through public service announcements on the radio so all Elders are aware of their rights.
- d. Each community and region should establish a process for reviewing and approving research proposals that may impact their area.
- e. Each community should establish a process for determining what is considered public knowledge vs. private knowledge, as well as how and with whom such knowledge should be shared.
- f. Native communities should receive copies and maintain a repository of all documents that relate to the local area.
- g. Native communities/tribes should foster the incorporation of traditional knowledge, language and protocols in all aspects of community life and organizational practices.
- h. As regional Tribal Colleges are established, they should provide a support structure for the implementation of these guidelines in each of their respective regions.

Guidelines for the General Public

As the users and audience for cultural knowledge, the general public has a responsibility to exercise informed critical judgement about the cultural authenticity and appropriateness of the materials they utilize.

Members of the general public may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- a. Refrain from purchasing or using publications that do not represent traditional cultures in accurate and appropriate ways.
- b. Encourage and support Native peoples' efforts to apply their own criteria to the review and approval of documents representing their cultural traditions.
- c. Contribute to and participate respectfully in local cultural events to gain a better understanding of the range of cultural traditions that strive to coexist in Alaska.
- d. Make room in all community events for multiple cultural traditions to be represented.

General Recommendations

The following recommendation are offered to support the effective implementation of the guidelines for documenting and representing cultural knowledge outlined above.

1. The Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools should be used as a general guide for any educational activity involving cultural documentation, representation or review.
2. A statewide "Alaska Indigenous Literary Review Board" should be established with representation from each of the regional Native educator associations to oversee the implementation of the recommendations that follow.
3. A statewide "Alaska Indigenous Knowledge Multimedia Working Group" should be established to

examine the applicability of the above guidelines to the production of electronic media and the publication and utilization of cultural knowledge via the Internet.

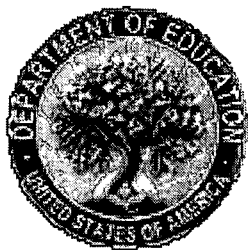
4. Criteria for "product certification" of materials with cultural content should be established and implemented by regional Literary Review Committees formed through the regional Native educator associations. The "Raven" images from the ANKN logo could be used as a "stamp of approval" for each cultural region.
5. Each regional Literary Review Committee should develop a list of authorized reviewers for publications reflecting cultural content related to the respective region.
6. An annotated bibliography of the best materials representing local cultures should be compiled by each regional Literary Review Committee and published on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network web site for use by teachers and curriculum developers throughout the state.
7. The Alaska Indigenous Literary Review Board should establish prestigious awards to honor Native Elders, authors, illustrators and others who make a significant contribution to the documentation and representation of cultural knowledge.
8. Incentives, resources and opportunities should be provided to encourage and support Native authors, illustrators, story-tellers, etc. who can bring a strong Native voice to the documentation and representation of Native cultural knowledge and traditions.
9. The guidelines outlined above should be incorporated in university courses and made an integral part of all teacher preparation and cultural orientation programs.
10. An annotated bibliography of resource materials that address issues associated with documenting, representing and utilizing cultural knowledge should be maintained on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network web site.



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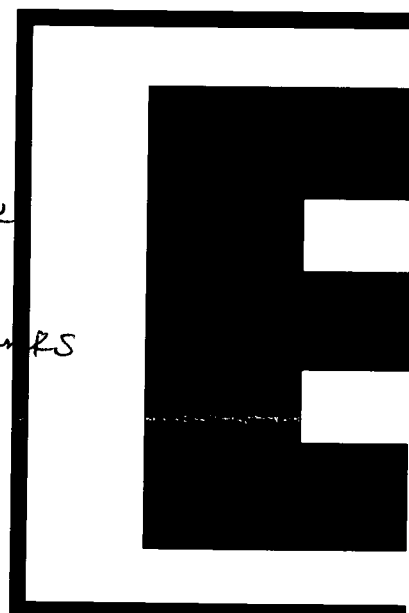
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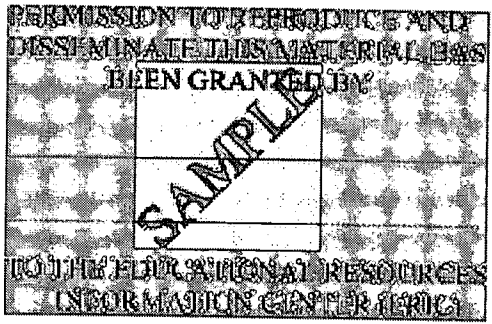
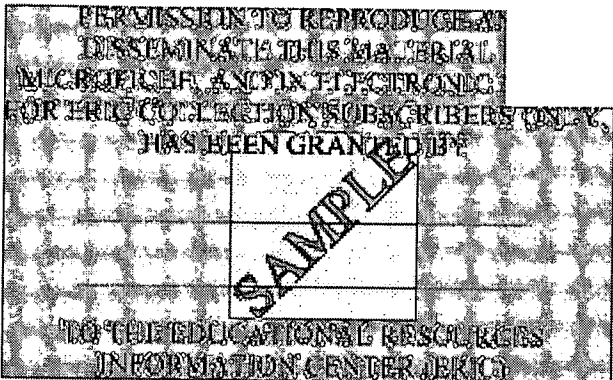
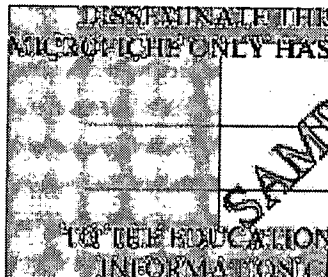



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